Historical Society of Palm Desert

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The Hourglass

Community
Service
Collections
Archives

FALL 2008

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Daniel M. Callahan
Coachella Valley Pioneer - His Life & Times

Edited from Society Archive by V. Folkers

The family of William Martin and Nel V. Callahan relocated to Long Beach in 1921. Both of the parents were born and raised in Iowa and schooled in small towns in that state. They attended and graduated from the Iowa State University at Ames. Daniel was born in Long Beach at St. Mary's Hospital in July 1926; he was the youngest of three children. Five hours after the 1933 Long Beach earthquake, "The Big One", the children exited that community and moved to the Los Angeles "Hollywood area", North Hollywood and Sherman Oaks and made their home with relatives. During the summer of 1935 they moved to Iowa and spend 18 months with grandparents, then all returned to California in the fall of 1936 and attended Southern California boarding schools.

William Martin Callahan was a geologist. He worked for the Texaco Oil Company after the family moved to Southern California. Nel majored in music, and became a full-time housewife after she married. However, she developed tuberculosis and her health was not very good after 1935. Dan's father died in 1936, and his mother passed away eight years later. After his father's death, Dan's Uncle Hank Gogerty took their family into his San Fernando Valley home.

In 1939 Dan and his Uncle Hank built their first home in the Coachella Valley, where Bob Hope Drive and Country Club now intersect. During that period of time, the resort business and farming were pretty neat ways to get along here in the valley. This acreage was known as the Gogerty Ranch. Dan entered the Army in 1944.

Desert Air Hotel and Palm Desert Air Park were built in 1945 and 16 cottages were erected. In 1950 the dining room and bar were built, and it became a favorite dining spot for locals and famous guests, like General Dwight Eisenhower. Those who owned their own planes found the turf airstrip convenient. A children's pool was added in 1954, and in 1955 nine new buildings filled the site. Eventually the hotel grew to 56 rooms, the bar and restaurant seated 80 people, and two 3600-foot lighted turf runways were installed. The complex was advertised as "fly in - drive in." Many locals and celebrities did just that! Dan managed the airport and represented the family in all developments of the property until it was sold in 1968.

When they reached adulthood Dan's brother, Richard "Dick", worked for the Bendix Corporation in the Auto Parts Division. His sister B'Anne graduated from nursing school in 1945, and then took a six-seven year leave to raise her six children. After that, she began working as a nurse for the major studios in Hollywood.

In 1946 Dan returned from his service in the Pacific and enrolled in Agricultural School at the University of California-Davis with majors in horticulture and business. Upon finishing in 1950, he moved to the desert to engage in grape, date, and citrus growing on the family's 320-acre ranch. The land consisted of one mile of frontage between Country Club and Frank Sinatra Drives on the east side of what was then called Del Sol Road. Today we know it as Bob Hope Drive. The property was sold to Bob Hope in 1968. It is presently the site of Eisenhower Medical Center, Hope Square and the Rancho Mirage Country Club.

Dan met a lovely girl named Barbara Jean Taylor and married her in the summer of 1950. Barbara later taught for thirty-three years at Washington School in Palm Desert. A son, Daniel Jr., was born in the summer of 1951, and a daughter, Patricia Kyle, came on the scene in the fall of 1952. The family of four moved to the Deep Canyon area of Palm Desert in 1958. Eight years later they moved to Dan's present home on Palm Shadow Drive which was east of Palm Desert. That area was later annexed to the City of Indian Wells.

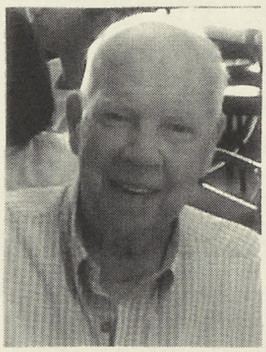
In 1966 when their youngest son was born, the item in the newspaper read .... "Timothy Michael Callahan, whose family resides on Palm Shadow Drive in Palm Desert, was born on Palm Sunday". Tim became the first "native" to register to vote in their new city. Even now, he votes absentee. He is currently working in the financial district of New York, but he still calls Indian Wells "home".

During the 50s and 60s Dan and BJ were part of the social whirl here in the valley. Their photos in the newspapers at various parties are witness to the appeal of this attractive couple. Henry Gogerty liked to throw parties at Desert Air Hotel. Of course, Dan was always involved with people and projects; like a quarter-horse race track at the Desert Turf Club with his friend Frank Bogert, or the JC's first hole-in-one tournament at Indian Wells Country Club.

Dan received his real estate license in 1958, and he took some courses at College of the Desert in realty appraisal. So it was no surprise when an item in the Daily News was titled "Callahan Takes Post with HMS Firm" in 1973. Its president, George Berkey, summarized Dan's 23-year residency in the valley, and announced that Dan would be in charge of ranch and acreage sales, as well as Palm Desert sales. During these years he came to know hundreds of people in the Coachella Valley, and he was a first-hand eye witness to the movement of history in the area. He was a close friend of Phil Harris, and can recite the experience of meeting General Eisenhower in the grocery store shopping with his wife, Mamie. It is during his favorite stories that you come to realize what a vital role as a pioneer that he filled locally.

Memberships and community activities

- Became a Charter Member of the Historical Society of Palm Desert, serving as President from 1988 to 1992 and again in 1998 to 2000.
- Co-chaired with BJ in the Mini-Muster Program the Society sponsored with the Riverside County Fire Department and Desert Sands Unified School District. This fire safety program has been administered to third graders in Palm Desert and Indian Wells schools since 1993.
- Charter Member of Indio Junior Chamber of Commerce
- Founding Member of Palm Desert Junior Chamber of Commerce
- Member of Committee to Bring California Angels to Palm Springs for Spring Training
- Member of Advisory Committee for the Riverside County Airport Commission
- 12-year member of Palm Desert Rotary Club, active in assignments dealing with youth and scouting activities
- Cub Scout Master in Palm Desert
- Served many years with University Extension Service in Grape and Turf Programs
- Block Captain for Disaster Preparedness, City of Indian Wells Program
- 1997-1998 worked with the City of Indian Wells securing and identifying photos for their "Wall of History"
- Member of Palm Springs International Airport Commission, appointed by Indian Wells City Council in 1997
- Member of Riverside County Archives Commission, appointed by Supervisor Roy Wilson in 1998
- Received with BJ "Living for Your 90's Senior Inspirational Award" in 1999, sponsored by Indian Wells
- Charter/Board Member and first president of Indian Wells Historic Preservation Foundation in 2001-2002
- Received with BJ "Cliff Henderson Founder's Day Award" from Historical Society of Palm Desert in 2003
- Retired as coordinator of "Mini-Muster" after 11-1/2 years in 2004
- Received with BJ "Volunteer of the Year Award of 2005" from City of Palm Desert.



Palm Desert's local history was featured in a production by Huell Houser in the early 90s with Dan Callahan being the expert guide in knowledge of bygone years. It was a great piece of work because of the input of if our well-known senior citizen. In August 2005 Dan lost his beloved Barbara Jean to cancer. The valley mourned with him, for his friends were her friends. The Society perpetuates her memory with the following:

B. J. Callahan Essay Contest for Washington Charter School

The Society thanks the committee members who have worked to organize the memorial for Barbara Jean Callahan, who taught at Washington School for many years. They are: Adele Ruxton, Dan Callahan, Evelyn Voth, Pam Broyles, and Hal Rover. This is the first year that the awards of three bonds in $100, $75, $50 denominations were given.

Fifth graders at the school will be eligible to enter the contest each year.

Winners for 2008 are: Samantha Ellis (1st place) Paul Rivera (2nd place) Jennifer Jenkins (3rd place)

Honorable mentions are: Kaila Cain Noah Feldman Sabrina Fletcher
Matthew Richards Kaylee Rodriguez Dylan Warner

Our thanks to those generous Society members who have donated to this memorial fund for BJ. If you want to remember her in a special way it is not too late to contribute to this worthwhile endeavor.

GENERAL EISENHOWER'S GOLF CART

A significant donation has been made to the Historical Society by the McNeilly Family thanks to the efforts of our new president, Barbara Keedy Eastes and Don's McNeilly's great-granddaughter Ella. It is the golf cart of President Dwight D. Eisenhower used during his residency at Eldorado Country Club. The Society also has furniture which was used in his home during that time, and donated through the efforts of Dan Callahan. All of these memorable historic pieces are on display a now. For the golf cart the Society extends many thanks to:

Della & Don McNeilly,II Jan McNeilly Ella Hingston-McNeilly
Joanna & Don McNeilly, III Molly McNeilly

FALL LUNCHEON
"El Paseo -- Then & Now"
Tuesday - October 21, 2008

Chairwoman, Marcy Gregory, has planned a special time for your enjoyment at one of Palm Desert's designated historical buildings: Jillian's Restaurant on El Paseo. It was built in conjunction with and slightly to the southwest of the Desert Magazine Building by Randall Henderson. A new location for the publishing of the Desert Magazine in the late 1940s was needed; and it included a community desert art gallery and shops which created a popular gathering place for residents of early Palm Desert. Also needed was an apartment building to house the employees of the new publishing plant....that is where the luncheon will be held. The delightful décor will prove to be a definite plus to the $40 meal. A social hour will begin at 11:00 a.m. and lunch will be served at noon. When you receive your invitation in the mail, be sure to make your reservations early, there are only 114 seats available.

MEMBERSHIP

Marcy Gregory has agreed to chair this committee. She is currently canvassing El Paseo merchants to join, and also to furnish the Society with a short history of their individual establishments. It is absolutely necessary to get new memberships if we are to continue in our present mode of operation. Most renewal membership dues notices have been mailed, so please respond by renewing as soon as possible. The Historical Society of Palm Desert is a 501(c) (3) organization, and all donations are exempt from U. S. taxation under the Internal Revenue code. Also, a membership makes a great gift that keeps on giving all year long.

Individual	$ 25.00	Patron	$ 250.00
Family	$ 30.00	Business	$ 75.00
Supporting	$ 50.00	Bronze	$ 1000.00
Contributing	$ 100.00	Silver	$ 2500.00
		Gold	$ 5000.00

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Lois Bradstreet

SOCIETY MEMBER WHO WILL LIVE IN OUR MEMORIES

Lois was born on January 14, 1928 to Milton and Mildred Doyle in St. Louis, Missouri. The Bradstreet family moved from the Chicago area to Palm Desert in 1965. She became very well-known because she was so active in the community. In the early years she worked at Leisure Life Patio Furnishings as an interior designer. After the death of her husband she earned her realtor's license and joined the ranks of people who sold homes in the desert. This career overlapped her volunteer services in Palm Desert where she made dozens of friends. For years she worked as the Field Representative for the Palm Desert Property Owners Association. Later on you could find her at the public library. Lois was especially valued as a member of the Historical Society. Chairing Founder's Day was her specialty, organizing and collecting luscious home-made cookies from baking members.

If you have been numbered among Lois' many friends over the years, a donation to the Society in her memory would be an appropriate gift. Her children will be notified of your generosity. Please note "Lois Bradstreet memorial" on your check.

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VOLUNTEER NEWS

The Society reopened its doors on September 15, and we find that we need people willing to volunteer some of their spare time to various tasks at the historic fire house. If you enjoy meeting and greeting people and guiding visitors through the exhibits, you may be the perfect docent. If you like to do research on any specific subject and enjoy working by yourself, we need you. If you could "hold the fort" while Anne does errands to the bank, post office, store, etc. -- please sign up on our "To Do" list by calling 346-6588. You will be notified of training meetings and field trips.

IN THE BEGINNING
The Life and Times of Clifford W. Henderson

Curatorial work of Clifford Henderson materials has been going on since 1998, when a large number of Bekins packing boxes in the crowded back room of the firehouse's west wing were opened by the Society's curator, Ginny Folkers. Nobody would claim ownership of the contents which were obviously rescued from a flood. It was also obvious that it was memorabilia collected by the inveterate "saver", C. W. Henderson. So Folkers began cataloging the 1800 pieces (without counting dozens of reels of pictures, some taken during Cliff's military service in World War II) calling it Collection 36 and incorporating it into the general archive.

Collection 111 came from the contents of nine file cabinets which were on display in the west wing of the firehouse. They were on exhibit as a reproduction of "Cliff's office", and were officially donated to the Society in December of 2000 by Marian Marsh Henderson. Because the collection was so large, it was decided to keep it separated into a grouping which pertained to Cliff's life and works, and a different subject index was created to accommodate this material. A number of the pieces were not biographical and so they were incorporated into Collection 36 and added to the general archive. The item count for collection 111 is currently over 8500 pieces.

Upon the death of Marian Henderson, Cathy Scott (Marian's daughter) came to clean out the house aided by loyal Society members. It was then that we realized that Cliff and Marian could have been nominated for the "Collectors of the Century" award. Besides contributing generously to the recycling effort of Palm Desert, two more Henderson collection numbers were initiated: 153 and 154. The first covered items related to Palm Desert history and were incorporated into the general collection at a present count of 1300. The second included items from Cliff's life and were introduced into collection #111 at a current count of 1800.

The job hasn't ended yet, but we can almost see the light at the end of the tunnel. There is still a group of boxes at a rented storage area that need to be sorted. After addressing these, we can heave a huge sigh of relief with one exception. Thanks to Buford Crites, the Bancroft Library in Berkeley is copying the files of Randall Henderson and sending them to our Society. This will give us a comprehensive insight into the life and works of Cliff's eldest brother and his part in the local history of Palm Desert. This collection will probably also be kept separate from the rest of our archival collections.

At long last Curator Folkers is moving up to her ultimate authorship project, writing the biography of Clifford W. Henderson and his role in the history of Palm Desert. His careers as a Nash dealer, manager of the National Air Races, promoter of the Pan-Pacific Auditorium and the Pasadena Winter Garden, and the founding father of the community of Palm Desert reflect his visionary outlook and untiring efforts in a lifetime of accomplishment.

ART OF FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL
Weekend of November 8th & 9th

This event is sponsored by the City of Palm Desert. If you plan to attend with guests, remember that the historic firehouse is open from 10 a.m. till 3 p.m. on Saturday for the enjoyment of the public.

ADOPT A STUDENT

School tours will be held again during the Society's 2008-2009 year. Students are guided through the Society's exhibits and given a grounding in the history of Palm Desert. The Society must pay for bus transportation of each student from the school to the historic firehouse. Your donation of $8.47 per child would be greatly appreciated.

YARD SALE
Weekend of November 15th & 16th -- 7 a.m. until 1 p.m.

This year the Society plans to intensify their efforts to raise at least $6,000. We are hoping that donations of pristine furniture, appliances, jewelry, collectibles, clothing, shoes, sporting goods and antiques will be forthcoming to help us realize our goal. This sale will reflect some changes. We need gently used clothing and shoes. Please try to get your donations to the firehouse by early November, so that we will have time to price these additional items. We do not want mattresses, bed pillows, computers and related equipment. Starting one week before the sale and during that weekend we will need volunteers to price, set up, sell, and clean up. Thank you for your cooperation.

DID YOU KNOW .... that it was Marian Henderson who proposed to Supervisor Ray Seeley in 1970 that Rio De Sol Road be renamed Bob Hope Drive or Bob Hope Boulevard?

NEW OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President: Barbara Keedy Eastes
Vice-President: Brett Romer
Treasurer: Madonna Marman
Secretary: Bonnie Bowie

Newly elected: Marcy Gregory
Yvonne Kelley
Madonna Marman
Kermit Martin
Eric Vogt

"PALM DESERT" BOOK COMMITTEE

The Board and membership wishes to thank Hal Rover and his team composed of Brett Romer, Kim Housken, Barbara Keedy Eastes, and Anne Tuttle on the completion of the "Palm Desert" Arcadia book. It will be back from the printer in the Spring; the cost is expected to be $21.95, with a discount for Society members.

MINI-MUSTER

October is "Fire Safety" month, so John Marman and his staff are preparing for another year of this highly successful program. The third graders of five local schools will benefit from the collaboration of the Historical Society, the Fire Department, and Desert Sands Unified School District. The schedule is as follows:

Oct. 2	Reagan School	(Fire Station 81)	39-800 Liberty Dr. - east field
Oct. 7	Washington School	(Fire Station 67)	45-768 Portola
Oct. 9	Ford School	(Fire Station 55)	42-210 Warner Trail
Oct. 14	Lincoln School	(Fire Station 33)	74-100 Rutledge Way
Oct. 16	Carter School	(Fire Station 71)	Hovley Lane Soccer Field

You are invited to attend and interact with the children beginning at 9:00 a.m. The field activities are scheduled from 9:15 a.m. until noon; the assembly program and awards are from 1:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. To sign up or ask questions please call John Marman at 346-1755.

BOARD MEETING SUMMARIES

Highlights not mentioned in above articles
By Dick Folkers, Past-President

The biggest issue is the financial situation for the Society. In 2007-2008 we received $45,000 from the City of Palm Desert. For 2008-2009, which started on July 1, we received $20,000 because the city reduced all groups like ours in order to balance the budget. The Society needs to bring in more money if we are to continue our various programs. Please help by recruiting new members, supporting Society events, and volunteering to help!!

An ad for June & July will be placed in the Sun City monthly publication requesting items for the Fall yard sale. Marcy Gregory will be concentrating on membership. Each board member was challenged to get one regular or business membership by the next board meeting. Bonnie Bowie has agreed to replace Marcy Gregory as Board Secretary. Note cards with historic pictures will be on sale for $2.00 each or 6 for $10 including tax.

Beverly Bergh and Anne Tuttle will be meeting with RSVP to get some of their volunteers to help us provide volunteer coverage throughout the year. The Society will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday thru Saturday from Sept. 15 to June 15. We want to be open and staffed by volunteers each day with 2 or 3-hour shifts.

The Board expressed appreciation to Don Graybill for cleaning up the back yard at the museum. Some people brought broken or useless items for the yard sale that had to be cleaned up. These items were not saleable.

The City Council of Palm Desert will be discussing future facilities for the Historical Society on Thursday, Oct. 9, at 4:00 p.m. As you are probably aware, the Society has run out of space for the archives as well as for exhibits. We also need a meeting room for the fourth Friday lecture series which is offered from January through April. This past year, attendance has exceeded seating availability and we have had to turn people away.

TRIVIA QUESTION

by Kim Housken

Name the person seen in the caricature to the left, who became the symbol of Desert Beautiful? As a bonus: who did Marian Henderson ask to draw this caricature? The first person to call the Historical Society at 346-6588 with the correct answer wins a custom made card of their choice.

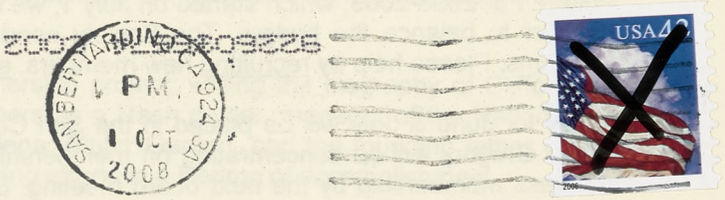
SCHEDULE OF UP-COMING EVENTS

Sept. 15, Mon.	Society museum reopens, Mon. thru Sat.	firehouse	10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Oct. 2, Thurs.	Mini-Muster --- Reagan School	east field	9 am - 2 pm
Oct. 7, Tues.	Mini-Muster --- Washington School	Portola	9 am - 2 pm
Oct. 9, Thurs.	Mini-Muster --- Ford School	Warner Tr.	9 am - 2 pm
Oct. 14, Tues.	Mini-Muster --- Lincoln School	Rutledge Way	9 am - 2 pm
Oct. 16, Thurs.	Mini-Muster --- Carter School	Soccer Field	9 am - 2 pm
Oct. 16, Thurs.	Mini-Muster Awards	Indian Wells	1:30 p.m.
Oct. 21, Tues.	Fall Luncheon, theme: "El Paseo -- Then & Now"	Jillian's	11 social-12 lunch
Oct. 23, Thurs.	Mini-Muster Awards	Palm Desert	4:30 p.m.
Oct. 26, Sun.	Pan Cake Breakfast - Palm Desert Rotary Club	Bank of Am.	7:30 a.m.-noon
	Golf Cart Parade - theme: Mardi Gras	El Paseo	1:00 p.m.
Nov. 8/9 weekend	Art of Food &Wine Festival	El Paseo	
Nov.15/16 weekend	Yard Sale	Historic Firehouse	7a.m.-1p.m.

***Remember When* Found in Cliff Henderson's Collection**

Remember when HIPPIE meant BIG in the HIPS,
And a TRIP involved TRAVEL in CARS, PLANES and SHIPS?
When POT was VESSEL for COOKING things IN,
And HOOKED was what Grandmother's RUGS may have BEEN?
When FIX was a VERB that meant MEND or REPAIR,
And BE-IN meant merely EXISTING SOMEWHERE?

Hope you had a cool summer!!
Hourglass Editor,
Ginny Folkers



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